

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

**DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln**

---

University of Nebraska Press -- Sample Books and  
Chapters

University of Nebraska Press

---

2013

# A Totem Pole History

Pauline Hillaire

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/unpresssamples>

---

Hillaire, Pauline, "A Totem Pole History" (2013). *University of Nebraska Press -- Sample Books and Chapters*. 241.  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/unpresssamples/241>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University of Nebraska Press at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Nebraska Press -- Sample Books and Chapters by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

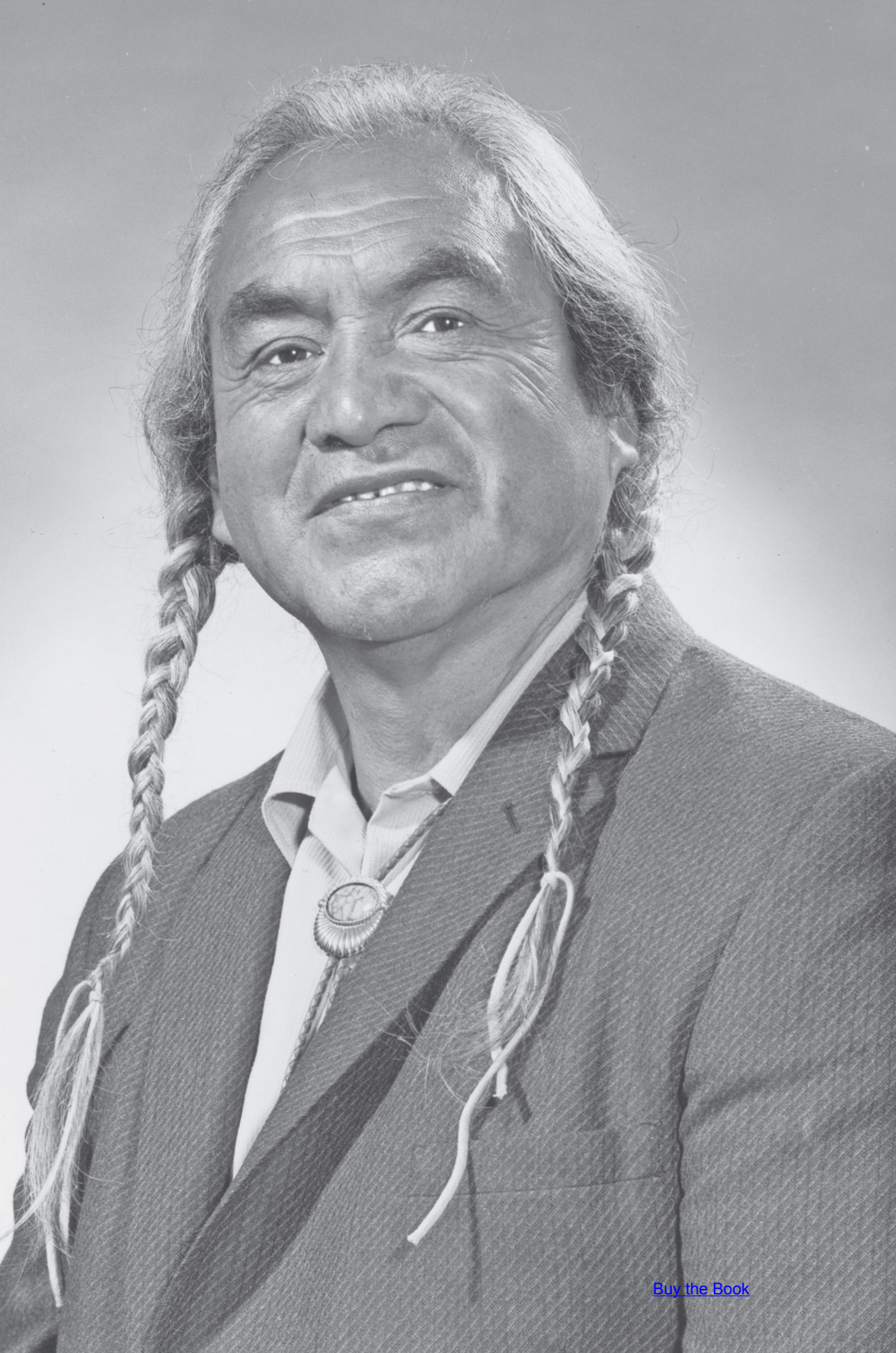
## A TOTEM POLE HISTORY

---

STUDIES IN THE  
ANTHROPOLOGY OF NORTH  
AMERICAN INDIANS SERIES

*Editors*  
Raymond J. DeMallie  
Douglas R. Parks

[Buy the Book](#)



[Buy the Book](#)

# A Totem Pole History

## THE WORK OF LUMMI

### CARVER JOE HILLAIRE

Pauline Hillaire | EDITED BY Gregory P. Fields



Published by the University of  
Nebraska Press / Lincoln and London  
In cooperation with the American  
Indian Studies Research Institute,  
Indiana University, Bloomington

[Buy the Book](#)

© 2013 by the Board of Regents  
of the University of Nebraska

Frontispiece: Joseph R. Hillaire  
(1894–1967), Kwul-kwul'tw,  
Lummi. Courtesy of the Seattle  
Municipal Archives, ca. 1961.

All rights reserved  
Manufactured in the United  
States of America



Library of Congress  
Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hillaire, Pauline, 1929–

A totem pole history: the  
work of Lummi carver Joe

Hillaire / Pauline Hillaire,  
edited by Gregory P. Fields.

pages cm. — (Studies in  
the anthropology of North  
American Indians)

Includes bibliographical  
references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8032-4097-1

(hardback: alk. paper)

1. Hillaire, Joe, 1894–1967.

2. Lummi Indians—Biography.

3. Indian artists—Washington

(State)—Biography. 4. Indian

wood-carving—Washington (State)

5. Totem poles—Washington

(State) I. Fields, Gregory P., 1961–

II. Title.

E99.L65.H55 2013

704.03'97—dc23

[B] 2013021876

Set in Garamond Premier  
by Laura Wellington.  
Designed by Nathan Putens.

*For assisting Pauline Hillaire with  
preparation of the manuscript, thanks to the  
Lummi Tribe Archives & Records Office*

*For assistance with photographs and  
historical information, thanks to  
Barbara Brotherton, Seattle Art Museum*



# Contents

List of Illustrations xi

List of Maps xiv

A Note on Lummi Terms xv

Nomination of Pauline Hillaire for the  
National Heritage Fellowship xvii

TAQʷŠƏBLU VI HILBERT

A Call to Carvers xix

SCÄLLA, PAULINE HILLAIRE

Introduction xxiii

GREGORY P. FIELDS

Scälla, Of the Killer Whale: A Brief Biography xxxix

REBECCA CHAMBERLAIN

## PART ONE: *Joe Hillaire*

1 Carving 3

PAULINE HILLAIRE

2 Power of the Bear: Memories of My Father, Joe Hillaire 9

PAULINE HILLAIRE

3 Kwul-kwulʔtʷ, Spirit of the War Club:  
Religious Man, Renaissance Man 25

GREGORY P. FIELDS



## PART TWO: *Coast Salish Art and Carving*

- 4 Straits Salish Sculpture 41  
BILL HOLM
- 5 Joseph Raymond Hillaire: Lummi Artist-Diplomat 45  
BARBARA BROTHERTON
- 6 Coast Salish Carving: Our Work Is Our Identity 68  
FELIX SOLOMON
- 7 I Look to the Old People: Reflections  
on Joe Hillaire and Carving 76  
SCOTT KADACH' ĀAK'U JENSEN
- 8 A Thin Red Line: Pigments and Paint  
Technology of the Northwest Coast 84  
MELONIE ANCHETA
- 9 Maintaining Integrity: Totem Pole Conservation and  
the Restoration of the *Centennial* History Pole 94  
ANDREW TODD
- 10 Archetypes from Cedar: Myth and  
Coast Salish Story Poles 101  
GREGORY P. FIELDS
- 11 Artists Were the First Historians: Spiritual  
Significance of Coast Salish Carving 125  
CHIXAPKAID (MICHAEL PAVEL)

## PART THREE: *Totem Poles of Joe Hillaire*

- 12 *Bellingham Centennial* History Pole 137  
PAULINE HILLAIRE
- 13 *Schelangen* Story Pole 147  
PAULINE HILLAIRE

- 14 Kobe-Seattle Sister Cities Friendship Pole 153  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 15 *Land in the Sky* Story Pole 163  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 16 *Man in Transition* Story Pole 177  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 17 T’Kope Kwiskwis Lodge Entrance Pole 181  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 18 Bronson Story Pole 185  
FROM THE ARCHIVES OF PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 19 *Halibut Fisherman* Story Pole I 191  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 20 *Halibut Fisherman* Story Pole II 195  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 21 Double-Headed Wolf Totem 199  
PAULINE HILLAIRES

#### PART FOUR: *Lummi Oral History and Tradition*

- 22 Some Place-Names from Lummi History 203  
FROM THE ARCHIVES OF PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 23 Canoes 205  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 24 Longhouses of Long Ago 211  
PAULINE HILLAIRES
- 25 A Wedding in Lummi History 215  
Plans for a Play by Joseph Hillaire  
FROM THE ARCHIVES OF PAULINE HILLAIRES

26	How the Lummi Came to Their Present Abode	221
	Told by Joseph Hillaire	
	FROM THE ARCHIVES OF PAULINE HILLAIRES	
27	The Lummi at Treaty-Making Time	229
	A Play by Joseph Hillaire, Performed	
	by the Setting Sun Dancers	
	FROM THE ARCHIVES OF PAULINE HILLAIRES	
28	Tsats-mun-ton	244
	A LEGEND TOLD BY PAULINE HILLAIRES	
29	Four Generations of Medicine Men	246
	A LEGEND TOLD BY PAULINE HILLAIRES	
30	The Mink Family and the Raccoon Family	249
	A FOLKTALE TOLD BY PAULINE HILLAIRES	
31	Stommish: Revival of the Water Festival	254
	PAULINE HILLAIRES	
32	Signs of the Seasons	256
	PAULINE HILLAIRES	
	Appendix	257
	Bibliography	263
	List of Contributors	269
	Index	273

# Illustrations

- 1 Joseph Hillaire carving the Kobe-Seattle  
Sister Cities friendship pole   xxii
- 2 Lummi carver Al Charles   xxxii
- 3 *Liberty* and *Freedom* totem poles with  
the *Sovereignty* crossbar   xxxiii
- 4 Scälla, Pauline R. Hillaire   xxxviii
- 5 Pauline Hillaire teaching song and dance   lv
- 6 Carving tools belonging to Morrie Alexander   2
- 7 Mary Ellen Hillaire with her carvings   4
- 8 Lewis Hillaire with his totem poles   5
- 9 Drawing of a bear by Pauline Hillaire   8
- 10 Haeteluk Frank and Agnes Hillaire and  
granddaughter, ca. 1920–30   10
- 11 Adult dancers in Frank Hillaire’s Setting  
Sun Dance Group, 1922   11
- 12 Youth dancers in Joe Hillaire’s Setting  
Sun Dance Group   12
- 13 Haeteluk Frank Hillaire, ca. 1920   13
- 14 Joseph Hillaire, ca. 1919   15
- 15 Edna Price Hillaire Scott, ca. 1919   16
- 16 Charles and Louise Anderson and daughter  
taqʷšəblu Vi Anderson Hilbert, ca. 1940   17
- 17 Joseph Hillaire delivering an oration   21
- 18 Joe Hillaire, granddaughters, and Martin  
Sampson (Skagit/Swinomish)   24
- 19 Chowitsut house post   40

- 20 Kobe official Genji Mihara, Seattle's former  
mayor William Devlin, and Joe Hillaire 44
- 21 Salish interior house posts 50
- 22 Totem pole in Olympia carved by William  
Shelton (Snohomish) 56
- 23 Japanese students performing a Lummi  
paddle dance, Kobe 60
- 24 Joe Hillaire with Don McQuade (Anishinaabe) and the  
moving van for the 1962 World's Fair carving tour 61
- 25 Lummi carver Morrie Alexander with totem pole 64
- 26 Lummi carver Felix Solomon steaming  
a shovelnose canoe 70
- 27 Aleut-style chief's hat by Scott Jensen 79
- 28 Mortar and pestle; antique carved paintbrush 86
- 29 Condition of the *Land in the Sky* totem pole 99
- 30 *Soul Recovery* by subiyay and CHiXapkaid 126
- 31 *Bellingham Centennial* history pole 136
- 32 *Centennial* history pole dedication 138
- 33 Joe Hillaire carving the *Centennial* history pole 139
- 34 *Centennial* pole detail: eight potlatch baskets,  
Man of Vision, sun dogs 140
- 35 *Slahál* game at the Lummi Stommish Water Festival 141
- 36 *Centennial* pole detail: Wolf Dancer  
with Flea, Moon 142
- 37 *Centennial* pole detail: the *say-nilh-xay*  
and cattails 143
- 38 Joe Hillaire carving the *Schelangen* pole 146
- 39 *Schelangen* pole detail: the *say-nilh-xay* 149
- 40 *Schelangen* pole detail: potlatch dancers 150
- 41 *Schelangen* pole at the General Petroleum Refinery 151
- 42 Pegasus logo 151
- 43 Kobe-Seattle Sister Cities friendship pole 152
- 44 Joe Hillaire carving the Kobe pole in  
Pioneer Square, Seattle 154

- 45 Joe Hillaire in the Kobe totem pole  
dedication day parade 155
- 46 Kobe totem pole interpretative plaque 156
- 47 Kobe pole detail: one of two sisters 160
- 48 *Land in the Sky* totem pole 162
- 49 *Land in the Sky* detail: geese 165
- 50 *Land in the Sky* detail: Mother Earth 166
- 51 *Land in the Sky* totem pole 168
- 52 *Land in the Sky* detail: warrior helpers  
of the two brothers 170
- 53 *Land in the Sky* detail: Man Moon  
and his animal warriors 171
- 54 *Land in the Sky* detail: descent 173
- 55 *Land in the Sky* detail: Daughter of the  
Sun restores life to the mink 174
- 56 *Man in Transition* totem pole 176
- 57 *Man in Transition* detail: Bear 178
- 58 T'Kope Kwiskwis Lodge and entrance pole 180
- 59 T'Kope Kwiskwis pole under restoration 183
- 60 Bronson story pole detail: Eagle 186
- 61 Bronson story pole detail: Bear and Raven 187
- 62 Bronson story pole detail: Mink in  
canoe, swallowed by Whale 188
- 63 *Halibut Fisherman* story pole I 192
- 64 Lewis and Helen Hillaire, *Halibut  
Fisherman* story pole I, ca. 1955 193
- 65 Joe Hillaire painting *Halibut Fisherman* story pole II 196
- 66 Joe Hillaire carving the Double-Headed  
Wolf section of *Schelangen* pole 198
- 67 Boys in a canoe made by Joe Hillaire 206
- 68 Felix Solomon carving a canoe 207
- 69 Joe Hillaire carving a canoe with  
grandchildren, ca. 1955 208
- 70 Lummi reef-net fisherman, ca. 1930–33 209

- 71 Smokehouse replica built by Joe Hillaire, ca. 1955 210
- 72 Lummi potlatch house, ca. 1930–33 212
- 73 Ancestral Lummi potlatch house in ruins 214
- 74 Lummi and Allied Tribes Chief Chowitsut, bas-relief 230
- 75 Canoes at Lummi Stommish 255

## M A P S

- Map 1 Culture groups of the North Pacific Coast lxiv
- Map 2 Location of the Lummi Indian Reservation lxvi
- Map 3 Approximate boundaries of pretreaty Lummi lands lxvii
- Map 4 Orcas Island, with Lummi place-names lxviii

## A Note on Lummi Terms

For their expertise and generous assistance with Lummi terms, we are thankful to Lummi hereditary chief Tsi'li'x<sup>w</sup> Bill James and Dr. Timothy Montler, Department of Linguistics, University of North Texas. Bill James provided assistance with the Lummi terms used by the author, and Timothy Montler provided spellings of the terms with diacritical marks for pronunciation using the Americanist Phonetic Alphabet. In general, we have used the terms as spelled by users of Lummi, and after the first appearance of each term in a chapter, it is followed by the spelling with diacritical marks.





# Nomination of Pauline Hillaire for the National Heritage Fellowship

TAQ<sup>w</sup>ŠƏBLU VI HILBERT

*Transcribed by Barbara Brotherton*

I WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE NOMINATION OF Scälla, Pauline Hillaire for the NEH National Fellowship Award. I was privileged to receive the award many years ago, and I know that its intention is to highlight our living treasures. Scälla most surely belongs with those who have spent their lives practicing and perpetuating the best of our American traditions. As a Native American artist and teacher and storyteller she has filled the important role of many before her, including her father and mother, Joseph and Edna Hillaire.

I have known Scälla since she was young, as her father and my father worked together in the logging camps on the Skagit River. I am ninety years old, so that was quite some time ago. Joe was a beautiful speaker and carver. Joe and Edna raised their children to be culturally alert, even at a time when it was frowned upon.

Scälla learned the spirit of sharing. Her grandfather was a cultural historian, and she prepared in the same manner to honor the ancestors through our oral traditions. I have participated side by side with Scälla at many community gatherings and public events and have seen the beautiful way she shares her culture with all those who have an open heart to listen.



# A Call to Carvers

SCÄLLA, PAULINE HILLAIRE

MY NAME IS PAULINE HILLAIRE. I COME FROM THE Lummi Nation. My Indian name is Scälla, which means “Of the Killer Whale.” I’m making an all-out call for young people with dreams and visions for the future of their children and the survival of their children. To carve, some of you think it’s a mystery, but no.

You’ve got to have heart, and I know you do. To carve as the Coast Salish people did, you’ve got to have heart. It has also been said, “Once a carver, always a carver.” The love of cedar or whatever medium is used, the love of the stories, the adventure of the entire event, from picking up the carving tool and picking the right tree or other medium, featuring in your mind, at first, the final carved product — every work of this art becomes a work of love, not just a challenge.

To say, “Once a carver, always a carver,” becomes a challenge to the workings of your mind as a young carver. Carving, no matter how long, brings more to the surface of the art than you expect. You’ve already become a storyteller or a historian once you carve, once you study the totem pole and finally cover and add your personal touch to it. Your world has expanded without your knowing it. You are already a very important

person to your family and your community without knowing it. It may be better if you don't know it.

Please hear this story. My father learned from his father, who was born in about 1846. He also learned from his grandfather Salaphalano, a priest of the Longhouse tradition who must have been born close to 1800. Without a formal education, my father built a two-story home for us. And this is how I know a carver can switch from art to building, and building may be an art. And so he built this two-story house for us. Sadly, it was burned down. It was on the corner of Slater Road and Lake Terrell Road. Now that spot is empty. It was a beautiful sight to see. It had a stairway that started with a turning spiral of three steps and then fourteen to the upper level. My brother, who was one year old at that time, and I watched as he completed the entire house, and he turned to us and said, "This house belongs to you." How happy a memory is that, because it was a beautiful home. But without an education to build, without any assistance whatsoever, carving gives you the tools. Carving gives you the tools, the physical and mental and spiritual tools, and the adaptability to switch from carving to building. They're both art forms requiring similar tools.

As Lummi stands now, it has very little history evident to the visitor. A visitor can come and look at the place and see nothing but the birds and the trees and the road and maybe an Indian or two walking. They have no evident history, and that's what we need. So we need you to present your stories to the community: your interpretation, your knowledge. Carvings are few, and those that are evident are not as obvious to the community or visitor or as close to the history books of recent years as they should be. Totem poles of various shapes and media around the world hold valuable history of their localities. They carry more than what your school's history books can say. The heartfelt feelings that caused them to be created remain for centuries beyond their initial creation. History books need help. Families need help. For their history, tribes had best not deny the history you have for your first totem pole.

Today's carvers are standing ready to help you pass along your knowledge with this art. All they need is for you to share. I was never so pleased as when I was seated at a recent funeral and a young man unknown to

me came up to me and introduced himself as David Wilson's son. David Wilson is a very good carver and has a history of carving. And so this young man came up to me and introduced himself to me and was pleased that I was a storyteller and that he received some knowledge from me. And so I was so happy for that opportunity. Please make yourself known wherever you go as a carver. Release that knowledge. Your family needs you, and so does your tribe.

Now this history of carving goes a long, long way, mentally and physically, physically and spiritually. Carving is the result of a dream, of a vision, of a spiritual message. It is possible for anyone, any age, and for young people in particular to remember their dreams.

And so, my beloved people, when you hear my voice, remember that my voice is carrying a message to you. To you who are listening to me from anywhere, our Indian history is lacking in your knowledge. It is lacking in your spirit of survival. Wounded Knee was only about a hundred years ago. It was not much more than a hundred years ago that Washington State became a state and the tribes were forced to sign peace treaties. But when things are removed, they are always replaced by the Great Spirit. Anything that's removed by the Great Spirit, like carving, art, history, and love, is replaced, is rebuilt, is revitalized and brought to your children and grandchildren. I thank you for being wherever you are, but we need you.

Thank you.





[Buy the Book](#)

# Introduction

GREGORY P. FIELDS

THE BEST-KNOWN TOTEM POLES ARE THOSE OF THE northern Pacific Coast, that is, the totem poles of Alaska and northern British Columbia from tribes such as the Tlingit, Haida, and Kwakwaka'wakw (see map 1). However, south of these tribes, a number of Coast Salish tribes in Canada and Washington State also carve totem poles. Among American Coast Salish tribes, the tradition of totem pole carving is particularly strong at Lummi both historically and currently. The United States and Canada established a national border at the forty-ninth parallel with the Oregon Treaty of 1846. Before the arrival of Anglo-Europeans, the Lummi Tribe was a large tribe whose ancestral territory covered an expansive area of coastal northern Washington extending into southwestern British Columbia (see map 3). The Lummi Tribe is the northernmost American Coast Salish tribe, so it is not surprising that this Washington tribe, just twenty miles south of the border of British Columbia, is among the totem pole tribes of the Pacific Northwest (see map 2).

1. Joseph Hillaire carving the Kobe-Seattle Sister Cities friendship pole, 1961. Reprinted by permission from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer Collection, Museum of History and Industry, Seattle.



The Lummi are also known as Lhaq'temish ("LAHK-temish"), People of the Sea. The Lummi tribe is the third largest tribe in Washington State, with over 4,500 members as of 2011. In the past century and a half, the population of the Lummi Tribe has recovered significantly from the few hundred persons who survived after Anglo-Europeans began to arrive in the late eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, new diseases, loss of homelands, loss of food-gathering places, and impaired livelihoods caused the decimation of Native populations on the northern Pacific Coast.<sup>1</sup> In 1854, the year before the Lummi and other western Washington tribes signed the Treaty of Point Elliott, Isaac I. Stevens, governor of Washington Territory and superintendent of Indian Affairs, estimated the number of Lummi people at 450.<sup>2</sup> Fifty-five years after the treaty was signed, the 1910 Census listed 395 residents of the Lummi Reservation (including the non-Native Indian agent and his family). Among the residents of the Lummi Reservation in 1910 was Joseph Hillaire, age fifteen.

Lummi elder Pauline Hillaire, Scälla, *Of the Killer Whale*, was born, as she understood it, in 1929 (U.S. records identify her birth year as 1931). She has written this book about the totem poles carved by her father, master carver Joseph R. Hillaire, Kwul-kwul'tw, Spirit of the War Club (Lummi, 1894–1967), in order to document her father's major works and to share some of the ancestral stories and teachings, as well as the contemporary history, carried by these totem poles. Scälla learned by experience and instruction from her mother and father, and other elders, about Lummi cultural teachings. Throughout her life she watched her father carve, so she can convey with great depth of understanding the history, stories, and interpretation of these totem poles. She presents this history of Joe's totem poles with a number of aims, primary among them, to help prevent loss of the ancestral art of totem pole carving and its associated cultural teachings and to encourage and inform artists of this and future generations. Like her father and his father before him, Haeteluk Frank Hillaire (born in approximately 1846), Scälla has educated wider audiences about Coast Salish Lummi culture, and this book is also a contribution to humanity and the humanities globally. Scälla has created this book, with its companion media (two audio CDs and a DVD), for the sake of

cultural preservation and continuation: to inspire carvers and artists and to encourage young people to take up cultivation of the ancestral arts. For all humanity, her contribution can inspire — aesthetically, intellectually, and spiritually — and help to generate commitment to the perpetuation of ancestral spiritual arts.

The term *totem pole* is an Anglo-European term for monumental wood pillars carved by people of the northern Pacific Coast. Although the Pacific Northwest, with its massive cedar trees, is the homeland of the totem pole, the word *totem* is not a Northwest Coast Indian term. The word comes from the Anishinaabe word *ototeman*, which pertains to kinship. The terms *totem* and *totemism* are anthropological terms that refer to a variety of beliefs and practices concerning relationships between human groups and natural phenomena, usually animals but also plants, celestial bodies, and other living beings, places, and powers of nature. Two important kinds of relationships exist in totemism: a relationship with other people who have the same totem (e.g., the bear) and a relationship with the spirit of the bear. Marjorie Halpin, who was curator of ethnology at the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, explains these relationships: “Just as bears differ from wolves and eagles, so do the people of Group A (whose totem is the bear) differ from those of Group B (whose totem is the wolf) and Group C (whose totem is the eagle). This does not mean that the people of Group A consider themselves to be like bears, or to have bear characteristics. When a Northwest Indian says ‘I am a Killerwhale,’ he means he belongs to a kinship group which has a legendary relationship with the killerwhale.”<sup>3</sup> The figures on totem poles of the northern Pacific Northwest cultures (i.e., north of the Coast Salish) generally represent supernatural beings with whom the ancestors of a family had encounters and formed relationships. The family therefore acquired a right to display those particular figures as crests: symbols of their family identity and records of their history. Many Coast Salish poles have the characteristic feature of being “story poles” or “history poles,” which convey myths, legends, or episodes of history. Story poles and history poles also have family crests and tribal symbols and motifs. Joe Hillaire’s works are primarily story poles and history poles. We could

have titled this book *A Story Pole History* but chose *A Totem Pole History*, since story poles and history poles are types of totem poles and because of the familiarity of the term *totem pole*.

The book has four parts: “Joe Hillaire,” “Coast Salish Art and Carving,” “Totem Poles of Joe Hillaire,” and “Lummi Oral History and Tradition.” The main part of the book, part 3, presents images of nine of Joe’s major totem poles along with Scälla’s interpretations and some stories associated with each of these poles.

The essays in this book offer a range of perspectives on Coast Salish totem poles and oral tradition and on Joe Hillaire’s contributions to this art form and cultural practice. Pauline’s longtime collaborator, Rebecca Chamberlain, member of the faculty at the Evergreen State College, provides a short biography of Pauline Hillaire. Bill Holm, professor emeritus of art history and curator emeritus of Northwest Coast Indian art at the Burke Museum at the University of Washington, has written an introduction to the history and nature of Straits Salish carving entitled “Straits Salish Sculpture.” Barbara Brotherton, curator of Native American art at the Seattle Art Museum, has provided the essay “Joseph Raymond Hillaire: Lummi Artist-Diplomat.” The essay provides insight into Joe Hillaire’s carving in his work for Native rights and better intercultural relations in the mid-twentieth century. Carver Felix Solomon, Lummi/Haida, who operates the carving studio Chulh tse X’epy (Tradition of Cedar), is especially known for his efforts to bring back ancestral knowledge and procedures of canoe carving. He speaks about the challenges and power of carving in his essay, “Coast Salish Carving: Our Work Is Our Identity.” In the essay “I Look to the Old People,” carver Scott Kadach’ āak’u Jensen, who operates the studio Speaking Cedar and whose works are exhibited at the Stonington Gallery in Seattle, shares reflections about Joe Hillaire’s legacy, carving, and the creative process. Melonie Ancheta is an artist and authority on pigment and paint technology of Northwest Coast art. She has taught at Northwest Indian College and consulted for the Canadian Conservation Institute, and her works are exhibited at the Stonington Gallery. Her essay, “A Thin Red Line: Pigments and Paint Technology of the Northwest Coast,” offers findings about pigments and paints used

for Coast Salish poles along with observations about the painting of several of Joe Hillaire's works. Art conservator Andrew Todd worked with Canada's two major conservation facilities, the Conservation Division of Parks Canada and the Canadian Conservation Institute, before establishing a private practice based in Vancouver. His essay, "Maintaining Integrity: Totem Pole Conservation and the Restoration of the *Centennial* History Pole," addresses both methods and imperatives for preservation of Coast Salish totem poles. An essay by the book's editor, philosopher Gregory Fields, entitled "Archetypes from Cedar: Myth and Coast Salish Story Poles," talks about how Coast Salish totem poles convey myths: stories that express profound and healing truths. In the final essay, "Artists Were the First Historians: Spiritual Significance of Coast Salish Carving," CHiXapkaid (Michael Pavel), an artist, carver, and culture bearer of the Skokomish Tribe and professor at the University of Oregon, speaks to the cultural and spiritual significance of Coast Salish carving.

Available with this book is a media companion: a DVD and two audio CDs. This utilization of multimedia (integrated text and audio and video recordings) provides a more comprehensive account and, importantly, a presentation style that is more culturally appropriate to an oral tradition than a text would be by itself. Audio CD volume 1 includes songs and commentary from Joe Hillaire. Eighteen of the songs were recorded in 1953 by Leon Metcalf as part of the Metcalf audio collection held by the Burke Museum at the University of Washington. Commentary by Joe Hillaire and some additional songs were recorded at Suquamish in 1965 by Thomas R. Speer. Audio CD volume 2 contains Pauline Hillaire's "A Call to Carvers" and her telling of stories of several of the totem poles. The CD concludes with commentary from Pauline Hillaire and from master carvers Felix Solomon and Scott Jensen. The audio version of Scälla's telling of the "Land in the Sky" story was recorded by Jill Linzee of Northwest Heritage Resources (recorded at Jack Straw Productions in 2008). The same recording appears also on Scälla's audio CD, *Lummi Legends: Tales Told by My Father, Kwul-kwul'tw* (Northwest Heritage Resources, 2008).

The DVD has three chapters. The first chapter is a presentation in which Scälla speaks on how totem poles are "read" or interpreted. The presentation

was video-recorded at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in June 2008 when Scälla was seventy-nine years old. In the second chapter of the DVD, Scälla's voice narrates a version of the myth that goes with the *Land in the Sky* totem pole, along with photographic images of the pole. The third chapter is a short film originally produced in 1965 by Prof. Erna Gunther of the Burke Museum, with Joe's voice telling the story "Grandmother Rock and the Little Crabs." Postproduction of the DVD was done by Aaron Bourget of Seattle, Nicholas Cline of Indiana University, and editor Gregory Fields. Audio material for the project was recorded and mastered at Jack Straw Productions in Seattle in May 2010 (audio engineer, Tom Stiles) and in July 2011 at Sound Wise Studio in Bellingham, Washington (audio engineer, Travis Jordan). Additional audio mastering was done at the Center for Documentation of Endangered Languages Sound Laboratory, American Indian Studies Research Institute, Indiana University Bloomington (audio engineer, Jon Bowman). The media companion was produced by the book's editor, Gregory Fields.

Scälla wrote this book in 2009 and 2010 and was assisted by the Lummi Office of Archives and Records. In 2010 and 2011 I (the editor) carried out additional research and writing, integrated transcriptions of recorded materials into the book, edited the text with Scälla, located additional images, obtained the essays, and produced the companion media.

Marjorie Halpin wrote the following about the meaning of totem poles:

When a totem pole was commissioned, the artist was told which crests it was to show, but there was considerable evidence that he was given freedom in how he chose to portray them. It appears also that the artists put into their designs hidden meanings and visual puns of their own. The meaning of a totem pole was therefore very personalized: to know exactly what a totem pole signified it would be necessary to ask both its owner and the carver what they had intended it to mean. Recorded information of this kind is surprisingly meager, so that we know only the meanings of totem poles in the most general and, thus, superficial ways. Most of their meanings have died with the people for whom and by whom they were carved.<sup>4</sup>

Scälla's book, with its companion media, makes a valuable contribution by conveying, in the voice of a knowledgeable culture bearer, teachings and meanings represented by the major works of a particular carver, her father, Joe Hillaire. There are many topics related to totem poles that this book does not aim to address but that are addressed in several outstanding works on the subject. Hilary Stewart's book *Cedar: Tree of Life to the Northwest Coast Indians* contains drawings and descriptions of tools and methods used to fell and work cedar for the making of totem poles and many other objects of utility and art. Stewart's *Looking at Totem Poles* provides a guide to a number of poles in British Columbia, with information on how to locate them and insights concerning the meanings they convey. Halpin's book *Totem Poles: An Illustrated Guide* discusses the role of totem poles in Northwest Coast culture, offers guidance on understanding totem poles culturally and aesthetically, and provides images and descriptions of totem poles within the collections and grounds of the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology. Edward Malin's *Totem Poles of the Northwest Coast* provides a detailed account of the history and styles of carving by northern tribes of the Pacific Coast (the Haida, Tsimshian, Tlingit, Kwakwaka'wakw, and Nuuchahnulth) and contains many contemporary and archival photos. *The Totem Pole: An Intercultural History* by Aldona Jonaitis and Aaron Glass is a magnificent, profusely illustrated work of art history and anthropology that examines the intercultural history of totem pole art in the Northwest, particularly the influence of colonialism on the proliferation of totem poles in the nineteenth century.

This book, *A Totem Pole History: The Work of Lummi Carver Joe Hillaire*, does, however, make some significant contributions that have not been made by the several excellent publications already available on the topic. First of all, as noted, Scälla's book provides a knowledgeable Native voice that recounts the history and the cultural and spiritual significance of the totem poles of a particular Native carver. It is an opportunity of inestimable value to read and hear the voice of this elder culture bearer, who lived through most of the past century and is well acquainted with Indian life as it was lived in the early postcontact period that was experienced by

her grandparents and parents. Scälla presents the stories and teachings of various totem poles from the standpoint of her personal, familial, and tribal knowledge and as a lifelong student of the carver, her father. At the time of the publication of this book, the early twenty-first century, there are few Native American elders still living who are descendants of the immediate postcontact generations. In many areas of the United States, the first arrival of European Americans occurred two to five centuries ago. However, the Pacific Northwest was one of the last regions of the United States to be affected by the influx of traders, settlers, and missionaries, the creation of Indian policy, and the establishment of treaties and reservations.

Scälla was born of parents born in 1894 in the region where the Treaty of Point Elliott (1855) had been signed during the lifetimes of her grandparents and great-grandparents, among whom were signatories of the treaty. Chowitsut (Chow-its-hoot), her great-grandfather on her mother's side, and his brother Tsi'li'xw (Tseleq) signed the treaty, along with Chief Seattle and the chiefs and subchiefs of over twenty western Washington tribes. On her father's side, Salaphalano, the father of Joe Hillaire's father, Haeteluk Frank Hillaire, also signed the Point Elliott Treaty. The knowledge and traditions shared by Joseph Hillaire and Pauline Hillaire in the present work, therefore, come to us from persons strongly connected with Indian life as it was lived in precontact and early postcontact times.

The second major contribution made by the present work concerns the fact that scholarship and museums have given a greater share of attention to the culture and arts of the more northern tribes of the Pacific Northwest, while in many respects, less attention has been given to the Coast Salish tribes of southern British Columbia and Washington State. Although the art, architecture, and ceremonies of the more northern regions of the northern Pacific Coast may be considered more large-scale and dramatic, Coast Salish philosophy, arts, and cultural practices are no less profound.

In this book and media collection, Scälla has shared a range of cultural teachings that provide insight into the depth of Coast Salish thought and culture. The carving of totem poles was not originally a Coast Salish practice. Although the Coast Salish people carved large planks that were attached both inside and outside their ceremonial houses, the carving of



free-standing poles was not evident in the Coast Salish area until the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, when the practice developed as a result of diffusion from the more northern regions of the Pacific Coast. Jonaitis and Glass provide this historical summary:

Totem poles were not evenly distributed on the coast. They likely originated in one particular region, around Haida Gwaii (the Queen Charlotte Islands) or possibly in the neighboring Tsimshian Territory, spreading over time to both northern and southern groups. Nor were they a unitary phenomenon, as the widespread application of the term “totem poles” implies. There were and are a variant of carved columns of the coast (most with distinguishing terms in the local, indigenous languages in which specific types are found): “House posts” are interior structural features that hold up the roof beams of large cedar plank houses; “house frontal poles,” “portal poles” or “entry poles” are attached to the exterior façade of the house and occasionally include a carved out passage that can act as a door; “memorial poles” are freestanding posts, often erected in front of houses in burial grounds, which memorialize individuals; and “mortuary poles” containing the remains of the memorialized individual, often interred in a box attached to the pole itself. Furthermore, there were types of carvings in narrower distribution, such as “speaker figures” used to depict host chiefs or their orators, “welcome posts” placed at the entry points of villages, and “shame poles” or “ridicule poles” erected to humiliate or challenge rival chiefs. All of the carved posts have been subsumed under the generic term “totem pole,” the idea-typical version of which is a freestanding, painted, multifigured pole, often with outstretched wings.<sup>5</sup>

It is not known exactly when totem poles were first carved in the Pacific Northwest, particularly since the cedar wood of which the poles are carved, although very enduring, eventually deteriorates in the humid coastal climate. In the late eighteenth century, European explorers of the Northwest Coast documented totem poles in regions including Haida Gwaii.

In interviews conducted for the preparation of this book, Scälla has said that her father, Joseph Hillaire, whose father and paternal grandfather were





2. Lummi carver Al Charles. Photo by Mary Randlett. Reprinted by permission from University of Washington Special Collections, UW29786Z, 1970.

carvers and mask makers, started carving when he was twelve to sixteen years old, as early as 1906. He carved many works, large and small, and continued to carve until a few years before his death in 1967. Owing to the work of Joe Hillaire and a small number of Lummi master carvers, the art of totem pole carving became a well-established part of Lummi culture and art in the twentieth century, and it remains significant in cultural recovery and continuation.

In 1970 a Ford Foundation grant was received by the Whatcom Museum of History and Art (Bellingham, Washington) for apprenticeships in totem pole carving for four young men of Lummi. They were instructed by Lummi master carvers Al Charles (1896–1984) and Morrie Alexander (1915–73). The apprentices were Dale A. James, Israel L. James, Floyd D. Noland, and Al N. Noland.<sup>6</sup> The staff of the Whatcom Museum created a book titled *A Report: Master Carvers of the Lummi and Their Apprentices*, with photographs by Mary Randlett; the book includes a list of carvers. The report's text and images illustrate elements of the technology and art

of carving. Nearly half a century later, Lummi totem poles are well known to Americans on the East Coast and across the United States. Ten Lummi carvers, under the direction of master carver Jewell Praying Wolf James, House of Tears Carvers, carved a thirteen-foot healing pole, installed in 2002 in New York City in honor of persons who lost family members in the attacks of September 11, 2001. The next year an honoring pole was installed in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, in memory of the passengers of the airliner lost there, their families, and all past and present members of the armed services. Finally, Lummi carvers under the leadership of Mr. James carved the *Liberty* and *Freedom* totem poles with the *Sovereignty* crossbar, presented in honor of those who lost their lives in those attacks. In 2004 the poles were raised for a welcoming ceremony at the Pentagon and then were placed at the Congressional Cemetery in Washington DC.

In academic studies of indigenous cultures conducted during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scholars made efforts to collect arts, artifacts, and photographs that were free of European American influence. This trend is evident in early twentieth-century photographs by Edward Curtis, who composed photographs first by removing trade items, such as metal cookware and clocks, and then by arranging Indian people in



3. *Liberty* and *Freedom* totem poles with the *Sovereignty* crossbar by Lummi carvers led by Jewell Praying Wolf James. Photo by Rudi Williams, U.S. Department of Defense.

scenes to capture the appearance of a time considered bygone and pure. In a similar vein, anthropologist Franz Boas, who organized the Jesup North Pacific Expedition in 1897–1901 to investigate and collect artifacts from cultures on both sides of the Bering Strait, instructed field collectors to seek “traditional” (i.e., unacculturated) items and to avoid items made with trade goods, such as button blankets made with commercial buttons rather than with shells, the old way. A better understanding has evolved since then: innovations adopted by indigenous people that utilize new materials and methods, including those introduced by European Americans, are not, for that reason alone, inauthentic. The assumption that only precontact methods and materials were “traditional” rested in part on a presumption that Indians were a “vanishing race” and that indigenous people and their lifeways would soon pass out of existence. This presumption has been replaced with more informed understandings of how cultures utilize adaptations and innovations. Importantly, there are deeper understandings of the term “traditional,” whose meanings are not limited to “precontact style” or “the way it was always done.” “Traditional” connotes, among other things, faithfulness to general and coherent forms of practice and meaning within a particular cultural tradition, along with informed reverence for that which is signified by those forms. Totem pole carving, although not practiced at Lummi until fairly recently, is a natural development of the diffusion of practices from neighboring tribes, a practice consonant with the ancestral Lummi art of carving cedar and an art form that expresses ancient teachings and meanings unique to Lummi culture, in some cases, in response to interactions with non-Indian culture.

As regards influence and cultural diffusion among groups, factors such as travel, trade, warfare, and intermarriage have resulted in countless instances of adoption and adaptation of cultural materials and practices among Indian cultures. A major example of this is the carving of freestanding totem poles, which was eventually taken up by Coast Salish carvers. It was a natural development for Lummi carvers, who for centuries had been making cedar canoes, longhouses, boxes, utensils, masks, and other items, to transfer their skills to the carving of totem poles. Cedar was the primary material for making the majority of items required not only for

shelter and transportation but also for clothing, housewares, implements, and ceremonial purposes. Oral and lived traditions were transmitted by oral history, song, dance, legend, ceremony, and art, and carving was the fundamental form of nonperformance art. The totem pole lent itself naturally to serve as a sensorially and spiritually impactful medium, to record and to memorialize important cultural and family history and teachings.

The third way that this book and media make a significant contribution is that none of the available works on totem poles addresses in detail the totem poles of any non-Alaskan Indian cultures of the United States; existing works focus instead on the totem poles of Alaskan and Canadian Indian cultures. One book that focuses on U.S. totem poles was published in 1948 by the University of Washington Press: *The Wolf and the Raven* by Viola Garfield and Linn A. Forrest. It documents a U.S. Forest Service project to collect and restore totem poles of southeastern Alaska, a project that was begun in 1938 and employed Native carvers through the Civilian Conservation Corps.

The fourth contribution of this book and media collection, as a history of the work of a particular carver, is its illumination of some themes in the relations between Natives and non-Natives in the twentieth-century Pacific Northwest. Notable in this connection are Joe's carving of the *Land in the Sky* totem pole for the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle, the *Schelangen* story pole carved for the General Petroleum Refinery in Ferndale, Washington, and the *Bellingham Centennial* history pole. This book and its companion media offer glimpses into the historical period in which Joe lived and the continuation of Lummi culture and philosophy through the present, made possible in part by the unbroken legacy of knowledge and practice carried forward by culture bearers such as Joe Hillaire.

When European Americans arrived in larger numbers in the Northwest, their presence changed the practice of totem pole art in a number of ways. Techniques of production changed as carvers adopted the use of metal drills, axes, and other tools that were more efficient than the tools of stone, bone, shell, and copper that carvers had used formerly. In some instances poles were carved to cater to a market of Anglo-Europeans, whose cultural backgrounds did not permit them to grasp the significance that

the symbology of totem poles held for Native persons and communities. The trade of furs and other goods from Indian to white hands produced a greater amount of wealth that Indian carvers could invest in the creation of new works, resulting in a large number of poles being carved in the late nineteenth century. Although totem poles were carved in this period for purposes including commissions by new white residents who wanted to possess totem poles, this very active time of production of commissioned poles in the Northwest existed alongside the fundamental practice of totem carving as a significant Native cultural expression and record that white residents and visitors in the Northwest lacked the context to understand. Given the history of misappropriation of both tangible and intangible forms of cultural property and the sacred elements of cultural art forms, books like the present one should go only a limited distance in helping outsiders to a culture gain insight into Native cultural life and meanings. Yet there is much insight that non-Native people can appropriately receive from a work such as this one about Native art and culture and about universal human experience in the domains of the earth and waters, the human community, and the spirit. For Lummi and other First Nations people, we hope that this book will add to resources for the strong continuation of aboriginal practices and philosophy.

Finally, this work helps to document the legacy of the honorable Kwul'kwul'tw, Joseph Hillaire, a remarkable gentleman who possessed many talents, who cultivated those talents, and who worked tirelessly in behalf of Lummi and Coast Salish people for the continuing vitality of cultural arts and practices that he knew would help sustain Native people in a new era of coexistence with Anglo-Europeans.

Thanks to the University of Nebraska Press and to our editors and reviewers for making possible the publication of this book and its companion media. We are indebted to Raymond DeMallie and Douglas Parks and the American Indian Studies Research Institute at Indiana University for assistance and resources provided for this project. Special thanks to Jon Bowman, audio engineer for the AISRI's Center for Documentation of Endangered Languages Sound Lab. For funding, we thank Artist Trust; Jack Straw Productions; Loran Olsen, Professor Emeritus, Washington

State University; the Potlatch Fund; Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; and the Center for Spirituality and Sustainability at SIUE. Thanks to SIUE research assistants Lauren Gibson, Jenna Tucker, and Wendy Wyrostek. Special thanks to the Philadelphia Friends (Quakers) and community members of Bellingham, Washington, for supporting this project. Many thanks to the individuals and institutions that contributed images and to Melonie Ancheta for expert assistance with the images. To the essayists who contributed to this work, we are thankful for the years of expertise they have cultivated in support of the ancestral arts and for their generous gifts of time and effort to help create this book. Thanks to Scälla's chosen biographer, Rebecca Chamberlain, for many contributions, including traveling with Scälla to Illinois and assisting her during some of the recording done for this project. Finally, great thanks to Scälla, Pauline Hillaire of Lummi, for the opportunity to work with her on this project and for her lifetime of dedication to the continuing vitality of Lummi arts and cultural philosophy.

#### NOTES

1. Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence*.
2. *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 454.
3. Halpin, *Totem Poles*, 16.
4. Halpin, *Totem Poles*, 18.
5. Jonaitis and Glass, *The Totem Pole*, 4.
6. Whatcom Museum staff, *A Report*, 6–8.